AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1 and 5 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). A method of encoding a media signal, comprising:

defining a range of first code sequences that ~~would be~~ are generated by a first hypothetical encoder in response to encoding respective groups of one or more media signal samples by said first hypothetical encoder without encoding the groups of media signal samples,

using a second encoder for actually encoding the groups of media signal samples into second code sequences,

assigning to each second code sequence a selected one of said first code sequences in accordance with a mapping table, and

transmitting the selected first code sequences to represent the information signal.

Claim 2 (Original). A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second encoder has a higher encoding quality than the first encoder.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented). A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first and second encoders are quantizers, and the respective first and second code sequences are quantized signal samples.

Claim 4 (Original). A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the first quantizer is a scalar quantizer and the second quantizer is a vector quantizer.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended). An apparatus for encoding a media signal, the apparatus comprising circuitry for:

defining a range of first code sequences that ~~would be~~ are generated by a first hypothetical encoder in response to encoding respective groups of one or more media signal samples by said first hypothetical encoder without encoding the groups of media signal samples,

encoding the groups of media signal samples into second code sequences using a second encoder,

assigning to each second code sequence a selected one of said first code sequences in accordance with a mapping table, and

enabling transmission of the selected first code sequences to represent the information signal.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented). A method of decoding an encoded information signal, comprising:

receiving first code sequences associated with a first decoder,

enabling decoding of the first code sequences using the first decoder to obtain the information signal having a low encoding quality,

replacing said first code sequences by second code sequences in accordance with a mapping table, and

decoding the second code sequences using a second decoder to obtain the information signal having a higher information quality.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented). A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the first and second code sequences are quantized signal samples, and the respective first and second decoders are first and second inverse quantizers.

Claim 8 (Original). A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the first inverse quantizer is an inverse scalar quantizer and the second inverse quantizer is an inverse vector quantizer.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented). An apparatus for decoding an encoded information signal, the apparatus comprising circuitry for:

receiving first code sequences associated with a first decoder;

enabling decoding of the first code sequences using the first decoder to obtain the information signal having a low encoding quality;

replacing said first code sequences by second code sequences in accordance with a mapping table; and

decoding the second code sequences using a second decoder to obtain the information signal having a higher information quality.

Claim 10 (Cancelled).

Claim 11 (Previously Presented). The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising dividing a media signal into a plurality of media signal samples such that the groups of media signal samples all include a plurality of media signal samples.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented). The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising assigning an index to the code sequences that would be generated by the first encoder in response to encoding respective groups of one or more media signal samples by said first encoder, the index being used in the mapping table.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented). The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising setting the rate of the second encoder to be equal to the rate of the first encoder.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented). The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising selecting the mapping table such that distortion between the media signal samples and the first code sequences is small.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented). The method as claimed in claim 6, further comprising enabling the decoding of the second code sequences only upon licensing of the mapping table.